

**WILLIAMSBURG CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
APRIL 7, 2008**

The Williamsburg City Council held a work session on Monday, April 7, 2008, at 4:00 p.m., in the City Council Chambers of the Stryker Building.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Ms. Zeidler, Messrs. Haulman, Chohany, Freiling, and Braxton. Also present were City Manager Tuttle, City Attorney Phillips, and City Clerk Crist.

Staff Attending: Assistant City Manager Miller, Assistant City Attorney Workman, Economic Development Director DeWitt, Department Head Serra and Deputy Planning Director Murphy.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Zeidler called the meeting to order.

Public Comment: Items for City Council Meeting of April 10, 2008

Mayor Zeidler asked for public comment.

Mr. David Kranbuehl, 201 Harrison Avenue, appreciated the 4:00 p.m. meeting time. He commended Mr. Chohany for getting his priorities right (Mr. Chohany will not run for re-election in order to spend more time with his family).

Mr. Kranbuehl was pleased with the Beautification Committee's efforts, especially the new Landscape Grant Program. The Committee is considering improvements to Prince George Street, but with a modest budget. He encouraged Council to place trash containers the new Monticello Avenue bus stop, and at other bus stops, to encourage clean up. The city should take the lead to explore a program for the purchase and use of cisterns to catch and save water, especially during periods of drought. He appreciated the use of tax dollars to improve the city and provide for long term benefits and improve our quality of life.

No one else wished to speak. The session was closed.

Council Comment:

The Mayor noted that the resolution for "Go Green Virginia" is on the Thursday Council agenda. Part of the program is water conservation and the city has been conserving water for some time. Annual water usage is less now than in 1999, even though our population has increased.

Mr. Tuttle noted that the Building Code has helped to regulate flow rates, and that new appliances and plumbing fixtures help conserve water.

BACKGROUND PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION

Overview of W/JCC FY09 Proposed School Budget, presented by Elise Emanuel, Chair, W/JCC School Board, Gary Matthews, Superintendent of Schools, and Scott Burckbuchler, CFO & Asst. Superintendent

Reference for this report was the Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools budget.

Elise Emanuel, Chairman of the School Board, said that it was a pleasure to attend the meeting. She was joined by Dr. Alewynse, Mr. Burckbuchler, Dr. Backer, and Mr. Matthews. Some board members were not present because it is Spring Break week and they were spending time with their families. Ms. Emanuel thanked Council for its long term support of joint schools operation. While there was a budget increase this year, the city's contribution slightly decreased. Ms. Emanuel said that the School Board considered the economic downturn that has taken place. Because the state re-benchmarked the Standards of Quality, new money has come in for schools.

Dr. Gary Matthews, Superintendent of Schools, thanked Council for its support of public schools. Dr. Matthews reviewed the information regarding the budget provided on PowerPoint slides (attached). The budget increased 4.7%, totaling \$116,096,760. Revenues increased from local, state, federal, and other resources. Dr. Matthews said the major goals of the budget were to provide resources to maintain and improve the academic program and student achievement, to remain competitive in employee compensation, and to continue to implement the technology plan. Funds are proposed to replace aging buses and increase school bus driver salaries.

Mayor Zeidler said that these were good goals with attention to achievement and alternative education. Retaining teachers and improving technology will provide equitable opportunities in all schools.

Council members and school division representatives discussed:

- The budget increase is consistent or below what is usual for school systems.
- Council's appreciation for the proposed budget coming in at the guidance of the city and county administrators.
- Standards of Quality funding to remain about the same with no reduction.
- Student-Teacher ratios: Kindergarten: 20-1; grades 1 & 2: 20-1; grades 3 through 5: 25-1; middle school: 23-1, and high school: 22-1.
- New specialist instructor positions will assist small group and individual instruction. It is important that the community understands this approach.
- Response to Intervention is three- tier, in sync with the national movement.
- Study of virtual schooling and distance learning.
- There is no evidence at this time that technology in the classroom would decrease the need for teachers.
- Instruction is full time even though some instructor positions are part time.
- The three tier bus system was recently analyzed. A two tier bus system would require an additional \$2 Million. The schools continue to look at better efficiency; less buses on the road and less fuel used.
- This coming year, eight to nine buses will be replaced with better efficiency, using bio-diesel fuel.
- Studies about sleep deprivation in high school students.
- Comparative salaries in area school divisions.
- The new positions relate to goals of the school system. The increase in clerical staff is driven by need.

- Federal and state accountability requirements have driven the need for a full time data manager, as well as a full time grant writer.
- Pre-K is cost-effective to meet needs.
- The School System is ranked 9th of 130+ school divisions in the state for teacher salaries, because many of the teachers have master degrees and many years of experience.
- Teacher salary scales are being consolidated to be more competitive.

Mayor Zeidler thanked everyone for the presentation and information provided during the discussion.

Building an Ethical Culture in City Government

Reference for this item was Mr. Tuttle's report dated April 3, 2008. Mr. Tuttle said that ten months ago he invited a group of city employees to form a committee to review ethics and values in city government. All organizations need to enforce the capacity to make ethical decisions. This articulation group worked to develop a set of core values and Code of Ethics to guide employees.

Using PowerPoint slides, Robby Hutton (Recreation) explained the work that was done by three subgroups regarding Assessment, Education, and Articulation. Five new Core Values and a Code of Ethical Standards were written by employees for employees.

Jackie Herrmann (Administration) presented an overview of the ethics and values training that are being provided to full time and part time city employees. She explained the three-step ethical decision making process. Employees are asked to review three different scenarios and decide the ethical standards that apply to each. She concluded her presentation with a quote from Mark Twain: "Always do right—this will gratify some and astonish the rest."

Council members appreciated the presentation and were impressed with the presentation which was clear and on target.

Ms. Herrmann said that new employees will receive the Code of Ethics as part of orientation and ethics will be included in the annual QUEST class. An "Ethics" section will be added to the Personnel Manual.

The Mayor noted that the ethics policy is intended for city boards and commissions as well as employees. Council should think about adding an ethics section to its Policies and Procedures Manual in July after the next election.

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

Neighborhood Council: Mayor Zeidler noted that Sam Wasaff (Brandywyne) and Social Services department staff presented information about the Emergency Response Team at last Saturday's meeting.

Schedule of Meetings: April 2008

Council members received the monthly meeting calendar.

OPEN FORUM

Mayor Zeidler asked for comments.

Mr. Gary Shelley, 205 Indian Springs Road, said that the only way to get a student on City Council was for the community to lend its support. Regarding the property located at 110 Harrison Avenue, he thought it needed public discussion. The purchase of this property was placed on the Council agenda, but there was no public discussion. Mr. Kranbuehl contracted for the property at the price of \$275,000, which was more than its value, and later assigned it to the WRHA. The release of the presale appraisal document on the property would not have hurt the negotiating of WRHA. Without disclosure, it appears that Council bailed Mr. Kranbuehl out of a financially foolish transaction with taxpayers bearing the burden. He would like Council to address accountability and disclosure.

No one else wished to speak. The session was closed.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Haulman Moved That City Council go into closed session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia for the purpose of discussion one personnel matter per subparagraph 1 concerning appointments to boards and commissions. The Motion Was Seconded by Mr. Braxton.

Recorded Vote on the Motion:

Aye: Freiling, Braxton, Zeidler, Haulman, Chohany

No: None

The meeting adjourned at 5:17 p.m. The Mayor called a five-minute recess.

OPEN SESSION

At 5:32 p.m., Council met in Open Session.

Mr. Haulman Moved the Certification of Closed Meeting. The Motion was Seconded by Mr. Braxton.

Recorded Vote on the Motion:

Aye: Freiling, Braxton, Zeidler, Haulman, Chohany

No: None

Certification of Closed Meeting

Date: April 7, 2008

Motion: Mr. Haulman Second: Mr. Braxton

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Williamsburg has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the City Council that such meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Williamsburg hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed or considered by the City of Williamsburg.

VOTE:

Aye: Freiling, Braxton, Zeidler, Haulman, Chohany

No: None

Absent During Vote: None

Absent During Meeting: None

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Approved: May 8, 2008

Jeanne Zeidler, Mayor

Shelia Y. Crist, MMC
Clerk of Council